

Evaluating CRDF's Committees



By Rick Dantzer

In last month's column, I shared with you that the Citrus Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) was in the process of updating its business plan. It had not been done since 2009, and just like the industry has changed in the last 10 years, so, too, must CRDF, and we are.

This month, our attention has turned to an update of our bylaws, including committee reorganization.

CRDF's primary purpose is to analyze the research needs of the citrus industry and make the very best decisions on which research proposals to fund, so our committees must be organized in a way that best facilitates that purpose. Currently, we have three committees:

1. The **Industry Research Coordinating Committee** meets biannually to determine gaps for which research is needed.
2. The **Research Management Committee (RMC)** makes recommendations to the board about research proposals that are not likely to soon result in a commercial product. Basic research regarding HLB is a good example of the kind of research proposal this committee considers.
3. The **Commercial Product Delivery Committee** considers research proposals that answer questions needed to soon bring a commercial product to the marketplace.

While this committee structure has resulted in worthy research proposals being funded, it is prudent for any organization, including CRDF, to occasionally examine its organizational structure to determine if it is optimally organized to accomplish its purpose as well and efficiently as possible. For that reason, CRDF is considering such options as creating a subcommittee of the RMC to focus on nothing but the development of HLB-resistant and HLB-tolerant trees.

Another thought is to organize committees around research topics, which would result in smaller committees and the potential for committee members to develop expertise in subject areas. Perhaps some committees are no longer even needed, and in their place could be select committees that would be convened on a time-limited basis for the purpose of addressing a singular task.

Whether the board determines that change is needed remains to be seen, and there is no reason to reorganize simply for the sake of reorganization. Still, there is no harm in reviewing our committee structure to make sure we are organized in a way that gives CRDF the best chance of funding the very best of the proposals it receives. If you have thoughts in this regard, please don't be shy about sharing them with me at support@citrusrdf.org.

Rick Dantzer is chief operating officer of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation.

